

Rep. Israel, Mets CEO Fred Wilpon and former Mets players Discuss Military Mental Health Issues with Long Island veterans

Hauppauge, NY – On Veterans Day, Rep. Steve Israel (D – Huntington) announced new legislation to improve mental health treatment for our Armed Forces. The Joining Forces for Military Mental Health Act (H.R.2751) creates a competitive grant process to form new partnerships with the Department of Defense and non-profit centers to improve research, treatment and education for mental health and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) among the National Guard and Reserves.

“We’re going to need to think innovatively as we care for a large population of veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and are now returning home. We cannot afford to repeat the mistakes that we made in Vietnam when the Veterans Administration didn’t have the resources it needed to take care of our veterans. That’s why I’m leading the fight to form partnerships between private, non-profit institutions and the Department of Defense to improve mental health treatment, research, education and outreach for our Armed Forces and their families,” said Rep. Israel.

According to a Pentagon report, mental health issues are the top reason for hospital visits by men in the Armed Forces and the second reason among women.

On Friday, Rep. Israel joined with Mets Chairman and CEO Fred Wilpon to discuss military mental health with veterans. Mr. Wilpon founded Welcome Back Veterans, a non-profit organization committed to providing PTSD treatment to veterans and their families through public/private partnership with the Veterans Administration, Department of Defense, Major League Baseball Charities, the McCormick Foundation, the Entertainment Industry Foundation and world renowned Centers of Excellence at University Hospitals throughout the country.

Rep. Israel has long advocated on behalf of veterans. He has secured nearly \$4.9 million in overdue benefits for Long Island veterans.